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III. THE WEST

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France: De Gaulle and some of his key advisers doubt the wisdom of Anglo-American intervention in the Middle East. De Gaulle is reported to believe that time is running against the West in combating Arab nationalism and that the West will eventually have to come to terms. It is possible that French leaders hope that France's abstention from a more active role in the present situation may facilitate future French-Arab negotiations.

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DAILY BRIEF

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III. THE WEST

De Gaulle and Key Advisers Doubt Wisdom of Anglo-American Intervention

Both Premier de Gaulle and Foreign Minister Couve de Murville may have more serious reservations about the British-American moves in Lebanon than is indicated by the French complaint over the lack of prior consultation on the decisions to send troops. De Gaulle and many of his entourage are privately taking a very dim view of the intervention because they fear repercussions in North Africa.

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De Gaulle would be unlikely to express such views publicly since they conflict with the widely held French opinion that weak Western reactions to Nasir's moves have encouraged the Algerian rebels. De Gaulle may anticipate, however, worsened relations with Morocco and Tunisia and an undermining of his current attempt to win over the Moslem population of Algeria. The French representative to NATO told the American representative on 18 July that De Gaulle feels time is running against the West in combating Arab nationalism and that the West will eventually have to come to terms with it.

De Gaulle is concerned lest events move too rapidly to permit him to present a solution for Algeria. It is possible that French leaders hope France's abstention from a more active role in the present situation may facilitate future French-Arab negotiations. After the Suez crisis there were indications that pragmatic elements in the French Foreign Ministry were working for a modus vivendi with the Arab states in an attempt to save as much as possible in North Africa, and that Paris intended to play down its association with Israel to further that end.

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